



This fact sheet provides information about...

- the Superfund process.
- the recent site investigation.
- the status of the neighboring OMC/Waukegan Harbor site cleanup.
- sources for additional information.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency frequently holds public meetings to share information and answer questions.

Citizens interested in a public meeting for the Waukegan Coke Plant site are encouraged to contact John Perrecone at the telephone numbers shown on page 5 of this fact sheet.



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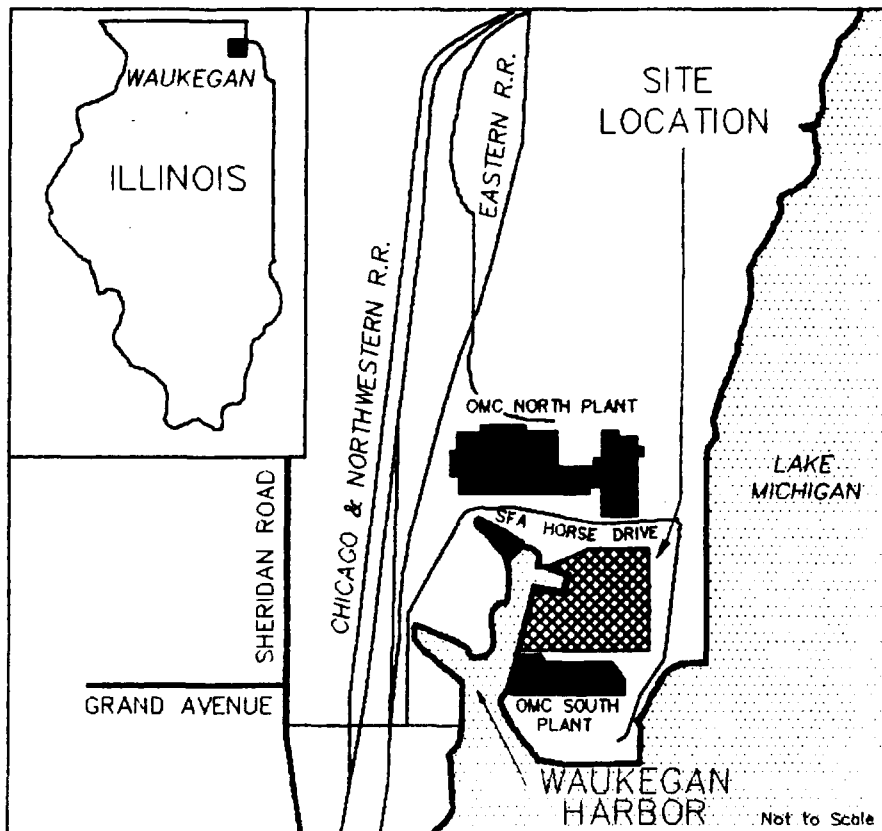
Office of Public Affairs
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77 West Jackson Boulevard
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142896

Superfund Study Underway

Waukegan Manufactured Gas and Coke Plant Site
Waukegan, Illinois **January 1993**



INTRODUCTION

On March 2, 1992, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) began a remedial investigation of the Waukegan Manufactured Gas and Coke Plant (Coke Plant) Superfund site in Waukegan, Illinois. This investigation, which is being conducted in two phases, will identify the nature and extent of contamination in the soil and ground water at the site. Following both phases of the remedial investigation, a feasibility study will be conducted to identify and analyze alternatives to address site contamination.

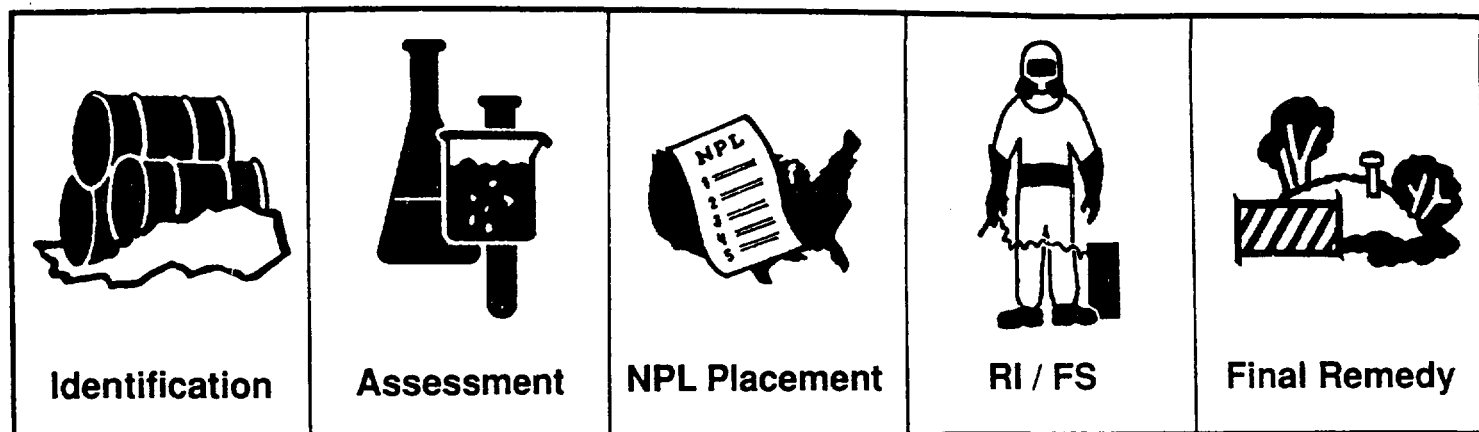
North Shore Gas Company will conduct the remedial investigation

and feasibility study under the terms of an administrative order on consent with USEPA signed on September 27, 1990. Under this agreement, USEPA will oversee remedial activities at the Coke Plant site.

This fact sheet describes the Superfund activities underway at the site. It also provides site background information, a description of the Superfund process, and an update on the cleanup of the neighboring Outboard Marine Corporation (OMC)/Waukegan Harbor site.

Various site documents are available for public review at the Waukegan Public Library.

THE SUPERFUND PROCESS



In 1980, Congress enacted the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act, or "Superfund," as it is commonly called. This law authorizes USEPA to investigate and respond to actual and potential releases of substances that may endanger public health and the environment. It also established a \$1.6 billion fund to pay for the investigation and cleanup of hazardous waste sites where those responsible for the release of hazardous substances are either unable or unwilling to address the contamination problems. Congress amended and reauthorized Superfund in October 1986 in the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act, increasing the size of the cleanup fund to about \$8.5 billion.

The Superfund process begins after a site is discovered and initially inspected, usually by a state agency. USEPA may choose to score the site using a system called the Hazard Ranking System. This system takes into account these factors:

- Possible health risks to people from substances at the site.
- Potential hazards (e.g., from direct contact, inhalation, fire, or explosion) created by substances at the site.
- Potential for onsite substances to contaminate air or drinking water.
- Potential for onsite substances to pollute or harm the environment.

The Challenge of Superfund

Since the creation of Superfund, approximately 33,000 sites have been identified as potentially hazardous. To date, USEPA has completed initial studies of almost 31,000 of these sites and, as a result, has placed roughly 1,200 sites on the National Priorities List, the group of sites covered by Superfund.

It can take several years to clean up a site because USEPA faces numerous technical and legal constraints during the Superfund process.

A remedial investigation and feasibility study are conducted to assess the degree of contamination, the potential risks posed by contamination to the community and environment, and the remedies available to clean up the contamination.

If one or more parties believed to be responsible for site contamination problems (known as potentially responsible parties) are identified and agree to cooperate, they may conduct the remedial investigation and feasibility study under the oversight of USEPA. If no potentially responsible parties are found, or if they do not agree to conduct the pollution study, then USEPA will do it. Through legal action, USEPA may later recover any costs associated with its action from these parties.

After the remedial investigation and feasibility study are completed, USEPA will propose a cleanup remedy and hold a public comment period. After the comment period, USEPA will decide on a long-term cleanup action, design the action, and make sure it is implemented.

If onsite contamination poses an immediate threat to public health or the environment at any time during the Superfund process, USEPA can intervene with an emergency response action.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Site Description. The Coke Plant site is located approximately thirty-five miles north of Chicago in Waukegan, Illinois. The site, which covers 36 acres, is on the portion of the OMC property bounded on the north and east by Sea Horse Drive, on the south by the OMC South Plant, and on the west by Waukegan Harbor.

Site History. The earliest site facility, a wood treatment plant, operated between 1908 and 1912 and used creosote to treat railroad ties. During the treatment process, some creosote may have dripped from the ties onto the ground.

In 1927, North Shore Coke and Chemical Company purchased the site and built a coke oven gas plant. Excess gas produced at the plant was sold to North Shore Gas Company. Coal tar, metals, and other inorganic contaminants, which are byproducts of manufactured gas production, are among the contaminants being evaluated during the remedial investigation.

In 1941, North Shore Gas Company acquired the site, and in the late 1940s, General Motors Corporation purchased the site and used it to produce coke for a foundry in Saginaw, Michigan. In 1971, however, General Motors sold the site to OMC. In 1972, OMC dismantled the coke plant and related facilities and has since used the property for a variety of operations and activities.

During 1990, a contractor to OMC began construction of a new slip to be used for boat servicing in conjunction with the cleanup of the neighboring OMC/Waukegan Harbor Superfund site. Construction of the slip was delayed, however, by the discovery of soil contamination related to the Coke Plant site. In early 1991, construction of the new slip resumed, slightly north of its original location. The slip officially opened to the public in July 1991.

Some 2,600 cubic yards of contaminated material were removed during slip construction and were stored in a secure wastepile on the Coke Plant site. Final disposal of this material will be addressed as part of the Coke Plant site cleanup.

On September 27, 1990, USEPA and North Shore Gas Company signed an administrative order on consent. This legal document authorized North Shore Gas to conduct the remedial investigation and feasibility study for the Coke Plant site.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Throughout the Superfund process, USEPA provides information to citizens in the following ways:

- USEPA maintains an information repository, which contains site-related documents for citizens to review. The repository for the Coke Plant site is at the Waukegan Public Library and is included in the existing OMC repository.
- USEPA has a toll-free telephone number, 1-800-621-8431, available to interested citizens who have questions about site activities. This number is also listed on site-related documents in the information repository.
- USEPA distributes press releases and fact sheets and holds public meetings to inform the community as technical milestones for the site are met.
- At the end of the feasibility study, USEPA conducts a public comment period about the alternatives considered for site cleanup and uses citizen comments in its final site cleanup decision.

INVESTIGATION ACTIVITIES

A two-phased remedial investigation is underway for the Coke Plant site. Phase I began on March 2, 1992, and was completed on April 23, 1992.

During Phase I, field screening activities were conducted to assess the extent of soil contamination released to the environment during the previous manufactured gas plant, coke plant, and wood treating facility operations at the site. In addition, soil samples were collected from outside these known site operation areas to determine the nature of those soils relative to the onsite soils. Ground-water monitoring wells were also installed around the site to determine the site's impact on ground-water quality.

Phase I analytical and field screening results indicate that contaminants are concentrated in three areas at the site: the former wood treating

plant area, the former manufactured gas plant/coking facility area, and the northeastern portion of the site. The results of the Phase I investigation were used to design the Phase II investigation.

Phase II will focus on additional soil and ground-water investigations. Additional soil borings will be undertaken and monitoring wells will be installed based on the ground-water flow patterns and contaminant sources identified in Phase I. Various other sampling activities will be conducted. In addition, USEPA will assess the potential risk to public health and the environment posed by the contaminants at the site.

USEPA anticipates that the remedial investigation and risk assessment will be completed by summer 1993.

OMC/WAUKEGAN HARBOR UPDATE

Significant progress has been made at the OMC/Waukegan Harbor Superfund site over the last year. Slip three, the main source of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) into Waukegan Harbor, was dredged and isolated by constructing a 290-foot cutoff wall at the mouth of the slip. Dredged material from slip three and PCB-contaminated soils and sediments from the northern part of the site were treated in an onsite mobile anaerobic thermal processor (ATP or Taciuk Processor) this past summer.

The ATP extracted over 35,000 gallons of PCB oil from these soils and sediments. The oil, which is being stored onsite, will soon be taken to a permanent treatment facility. The remaining sediments are being placed in permanent, monitored, containment cells located on the northern part of the site.

PCB-contaminated sediments dredged from Waukegan Harbor were deposited

into the slip three containment cell. As settling of these deposits occurs, sand is placed on top of the sediments to maintain a proper saturation level. When the settling stops, slip three will be covered with topsoil and grass will be planted on it. The area, which is fenced, will always be a permanent, monitored containment cell; it cannot be used for anything else.

The slip three containment cell, along with the east containment cell, will not be finished until spring 1993. The west containment cell, however, is nearly complete. As is the practice at any Superfund site, continuous, long-term monitoring will be done at the OMC site to insure that PCBs do not leak from the containment cells.

For more details on the OMC site cleanup, see USEPA's September 1991 fact sheet, which is available from USEPA personnel or at the site information repository; both are listed on page 5 of this fact sheet.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS AVAILABLE

USEPA offers a technical assistance grant (TAG) program that helps citizen groups at Superfund sites obtain assistance to understand technical data and to become more involved with the Superfund cleanup process. A TAG provides up to \$50,000 to community groups wishing to hire consultants to interpret USEPA-generated sampling results and reports. Twenty percent (\$12,500) of the total funding amount must be provided by the group. These funds may be paid in cash or by using in-kind services. TAGs cannot be used to duplicate field or lab work. The purpose of the TAG is to facilitate better understanding of existing documents and site activities and to offer groups a voice in cleanup decisions.

Municipalities, government agencies, political subdivisions, parties potentially responsible for site contamination, academic institutions, and headquarters of public interest groups are not eligible to receive TAGs. However, members of these groups may belong to a community organization requesting a TAG.

For additional information about TAGs, contact Susan Pastor (P-19J), TAG Coordinator, USEPA, 77 West Jackson Boulevard, Chicago, Illinois 60604; telephone: (312) 353-1325.

SOURCES FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Anyone interested in more information about the Waukegan Coke Plant site is encouraged to review site documents available at the site information repository:

Waukegan Public Library
128 North County
Waukegan, Illinois

or contact

John Perrecone
Office of Public Affairs (P-19J)
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
77 West Jackson Boulevard
Chicago, Illinois 60604
(312) 353-1149
or
1-800-621-8431

MAILING LIST ADDITIONS/CORRECTIONS

To update your address or to be added to the **Waukegan Coke Plant** site mailing list, please fill out and mail this form to:

John Perrecone
Office of Public Affairs, P-19J
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
77 West Jackson Boulevard
Chicago, Illinois 60604
(312) 353-1149
1-800-621-8431

Name: _____
Address: _____

Telephone: _____
Affiliation: _____



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